/854 cont./

X881 leader adheres to them. What is prevalent today was also the rule among previous generations who kept much more closely to the prevailing customs than the last survivors of this tribe under the inevitable influence of disruptive European culture. We can be X881 all the more certain that even in modern times this youth initiation is repeated according to the manner and custom of the an- 609 cestors because it is the one thing that is anxiously withheld from the cognizance of all strangers and is open only to fellow-tribesmen as something particularly sacred. We must remember that not even the missionaries, despite decades of association with the natives, obtained a tangible notion of this institution or, even less, direct insight into it (p. 644).

X881 This section on the daily program of the candidates has been put together on the basis of what we ourselves experienced, sup- 128 plemented with explanations by our Yamana. The description has been built up according to certain points of view, which is why it seems formalistic, but it guarantees that all the details are really brought out /855/ and properly set forth (276). In

> 276. This treatment also facilitates a detailed comparison with the order of the day to which the candidates of the men's celebration among the Selk'nam must submit (Vol. I, 1008).

particular the educational principles upon which the initiation is built come out most clearly. The initiation is, first of all, a continuation of the child's early training which, up to then, it received from its parents in the family circle.

X881 A valuable bit of educational wisdom has been preserved down to our own day in this čiéxaus celebration, for it has been 177 proved that European culture has exerted no decisive influence on the shaping of the external procedure or the form of the dominant principles. This fact should once again be strongly emphasized. In particular, the religious basis underlying the instruction of the candidates and the causal derivation of the whole performance help us to judge effectively the religious belief of these Fuegians.

X881 Although fully preserving the traditional, the Yamana do not by any means treat the daily program as a rigid, inflexible

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114 religious ideas and practices from every stranger since their contact with European culture and why they entrusted me alone with this precious heritage, albeit under very special considerations. I must say that the same is true of my participation on two occasions in their secret youth initiation, čiéxaus, as well as my direct experience of the men's ceremony, kina, and the school for medicine men, lójma-yékamuš. In their opinion I proved myself worthy of this extraordinary favor.

b. Content of the Yamana Religion

771 128 It is not a serious injustice to the Fuegians if, from the start, one expects no systematic organization of their religious ideas, which do not form a complete, compact, interlocked chain of thought; in fact, wide gaps are sometimes apparent. Individual ideas are juxtaposed loosely and without connection. Although the Fuegian has these ideas, he does not bother to understand them completely, and also he does not seem to feel the need of having them arranged into a coherent whole. A summary and arrangement of what is presented here as the religious heritage of the Yamana would be entirely foreign to him. I have personally undertaken it in order to present a survey and to make possible a scientific evaluation.

776 On the preceding pages Watauinéjwa, the /1045/ sole deity of the Yamana in the more limited sense of the word "religion" (p. 949), has been designated as a "Supreme Being" (10). Although

> 10. For the same reasons I previously likewise referred to the deity worshipped by the Selk'nam as a "Supreme Being" (Vol. I, 496).

the Fuegian does not have this conception, he in fact knows no other spirit superior to Watauinéjwa. The latter is also the only one accorded a unique power and a superior position, whereby he stands far apart from every other being. Finally, his relationships to human beings are those of an absolute master and sole lawgiver; one renders religious homage to him alone. It is only in this sense that Watauinéjwa is called a deity, as is customary in theology generally.